

Save Our Services in Surrey

Notes from meeting held 25th March 2015

What Next for the Care Homes?

This was a special meeting called to discuss the future of the Surrey care Homes Campaign.

A fuller, more detailed, general meeting will take place after the May elections.

Apologies were received from a range of individuals and trade unions.

Finance

It was reported that we have around £1,100 in the bank plus £180 handed in at the meeting (collected at the lobby), meaning we have nearly £1,300 – close to what we had at the start of the Care Homes Campaign – so thank you to all those trade unions and individuals for your kind donations.

Care Homes Campaign

We discussed the Care Homes campaign. The general feeling was that the campaign itself had been very good, very high profile and energetic (particularly around Park Hall and Cobgates). The lobby was covered by the BBC TV news, by BBC Radio 4, Eagle and Jackie Radio and most local newspapers. Sadly, the SCC Cabinet were not moved by this, voting unanimously to close all six homes.

We looked at what could still be done. The campaign does not end here. There are three key possibilities for the various different campaigners to consider:

- 1) A legal challenge – some families are looking into this. It is early days but any challenge would have to be submitted by the first week of June. It was agreed to put those families in touch with each other who are either looking at this option or want to be involved. SOSiS role in this would be purely to help get individuals together and then perhaps to help with fundraising for legal costs. Contact saveourservicesurrey@gmail.com if you want to be included in these discussions and you are willing to share your email address with other families.
- 2) The two trade unions, UNISON and GMB, who represent staff in the care homes, will consult with their members as to any appropriate further action they can take.
- 3) Use the elections – all SOSiS supporters and Care Home campaigners are asked to question their local parliamentary and local council candidates – Are you in favour of closing these homes? If not – what are you going to do about saving them?

Childrens Centres

We briefly discussed the threat by SCC to close 8 of Surrey's Sure Start Centres. At this stage it has only been raised as a possibility and the Cabinet on 23 April will decide whether to go ahead with a public consultation from July 2015 till January 2016. Some petitions have been started by parents and SOSiS has tried to make contact and offer support.

Election Charter

It was reported that only a small number of election candidates have so far signed up to the SOSiS election charter. For more information go to www.sosis.org.uk

Close of meeting